

House Committee on Judiciary Meeting Tuesday, September 22, 2020 8:15 A.M.

Good morning Mr. Chair, Vice-Chair and fellow Representatives,

The combination of the passage of Proposal 3 providing for no-reason absentee voting in Michigan and the COVID 19 pandemic has led to a dramatic increase in the number of voters submitting requests or applications to obtain an AV ballot.

Earlier this year, the Secretary of State conducted a mass mailing of absent voter ballot applications. Many of these applications were delivered to households where the addressee no longer lived. Some had moved away, and others were deceased. Additionally, local clerks, political and advocacy groups also sent AV applications creating confusion and possible opportunity for fraudulent activities.

In a time when many are skeptical of the absentee voting process, HB 5880 sponsored by Rep Wendzel respectively would make it a felony if someone:

- Knowingly fills out and submits or causes to be submitted an absent voter application contain or using another person's name and personal information.
- Knowingly fills out and submit or causes to be submitted an absent voter application with the intent to obtain multiple absent voter ballots for a person OR
- Knowingly submits an absent voter ballot application containing false information or a forged signature.

HB 5881 would add the sentencing guidelines for the felonies created under HB 5880. These felonies would be Class E felonies punishable by a statutory maximum sentence of five years.

At a time when we are inundated with noise about our elections, especially absentee or mail in voting, these bills will serve as a deterrent for potential shenanigans in our election process and enhance voter confidence. As a former clerk, I believe that protecting the integrity of the ballot and the process is of utmost importance and I urge you to support these bills and am happy to answer any questions.



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